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DRUG TAKING SAID TO BE PART OF CIA HIRING

Warsaw TRYBUNA LUDU 24 May 1966--A

(Sygmunt Broniarek dispatch from Washington: "Drugs and Suicide")

CPYRGHT

(Text) The CIA has again been set in the pillory of public opinion. A widow of an American colonel and her daughter accused the CIA in a court in Norfolk, Virginia, of administering to her husband drugs which made him commit suicide. According to her charge, the colonel was persuaded to take these drugs, not because it was desired to get some "secret" information out of him, but simply because drug taking was a part of the normal procedure to ascertain whether the colonel was fit to work for the CIA.

According to the indictment, Col. James R. Christiansen was invited for an interview by the CIA on 18 January 1966, following his application for a job with the CIA on his retirement from the U.S. Marines, where his last post was that of the chief of operations to the supreme commander of the Atlantic Fleet in Norfolk. Again, according to the charge, during the interview the colonel was subjected to the action of some drugs to find out his reaction. His wife and daughter noticed a serious change in his behavior on his return from the interview with CIA. Christiansen suffered from hallucinations and refused food, claiming that it was poisoned. But even he himself believe that he would overcome the results of the drugs.

On 26 January at 2 p.m. Christiansen drove to the house of Maj. Gen. Thomas N. Griffin, whom he did not know, parked his car, and went behind the house. Two witnesses stated that they heard a shot. After the shot Christiansen reappeared in front of the general's house, sat down on the lawn, put the gun to his head, and shot himself. The bullet from the first shot has not been found. The police said this was a suicide. Not knowing about the drugs, they did not test the colonel's body for traces of these.

Christiansen's case is interesting to the extent that the CIA has had lately a number of serious "bad breaks." As is known, the New York TIMES has published a series of articles on CIA activities. It is said in Washington that the accumulation of these revelations, which are unpleasant for the CIA, will certainly strengthen the position of those Senators who call for stricter congressional control over the agency. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee already has approved an appropriate measure, but it is expected that the full Senate will see a tough fight on its enactment.